

**Testimony before the Appropriations Committee**  
**February 15, 2013**

John Schweppe was not able to be here to speak because he had an previous engagement with his former employer, The Salvation Army, an appreciation dinner to recognize his and others contributions throughout the holidays.

My name is John J. Schweppe. Thank you Senator Harp, Representative Walker, and members of the committee for listening to my testimony this evening. I am a homeless man living at the Fish Shelter in Torrington, Ct. I have been a client/resident since August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012. The Fish Shelter has helped me to start on a road of recovery, along with Behavioral Health at Charlotte Hungerford Hospital and Prime Time House in Torrington.

I have experienced recurrent major depressive disorder and Cluster B personality disorder for over 40 years, starting as a child from a dysfunctional family.

I am in support of the governor's budget that includes funding increases to the following programs:

Supportive Housing: Governor Malloy's Housing Initiative includes investments in Supportive Housing. Being homeless and chronically unemployed, having access to Supportive Housing is an important tool to enable further transition in my recovery to move out of the Fish Shelter and toward independence. I'm a humble person, and I greatly appreciate having any roof over my head. Having supportive housing I could call my own would greatly increase my chances for full recovery.

I'm also in support of: annualized 1% Cost of Living Adjustment; establishment of \$40 million bond funding for Private non-profit providers. As a program participant at Prime Time House, a psychosocial rehabilitation facility, and a resident of the Fish Shelter, these cost of living adjustments are needed, earned, and will attract better qualified applicants and staff for these critical non-profit providers. Prime Time House helped me get my job at Salvation Army, helped with getting me proper winter attire for the job, is helping with career transition from construction to manufacturing, and helping me go back to school with grants from the Workforce Investment Act and other scholarship sources.

I am in opposition of Governor's budget proposal to reduce funding for:

School-Based Health Centers: The Governor's budget includes a proposal to eliminate funding for twenty-two new or expanded School Based Health Centers. This completely goes against President Obama's State of the Union address stating his support of school based health centers. If these programs were available to me during my formative years, decades of mental health episodes could have easily been prevented. The cycle of dysfunction that has been passed down from my parents, to me, and now my children does not need to continue. With access to school-based health centers my grandchildren will have the tools and resources to break the cycle and the possibility for stable mental health.

I would like to thank Governor Malloy and this committee for accepting my testimony.